

Idaho Transportation Department
– News Release –

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Click It, Don't Risk It! Seat belt safety campaign under way
Idaho's seat belt law is enforced to save lives

BOISE – One hundred twenty-six.

That is the number of people, seven years of age and older, who died in Idaho car crashes last year and were not wearing seat belts. Another 452 sustained critical injuries because they were not restrained.

The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) and Idaho law enforcement agencies remind people that buckling up is the best defense against serious injury or death for drivers and their passengers. Data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration shows that half of the people killed and injured in car crashes would have survived if they had been wearing seat belts.

“The number of deaths and tragedies on Idaho’s highways could be greatly reduced if people would just buckle up,” said Mary Hunter of ITD’s Office of Traffic and Highway Safety. “This is the time of year we remind people to *Click It, Don’t Risk It!*”

Idaho joins the national effort to save lives by increasing the use of seat belts. Idaho State Police and an estimated 60 law enforcement agencies statewide – that collectively impact an estimated 85 percent of Idahoans – are participating in a May enforcement campaign to ensure that people wear seat belts.

The purpose of May’s heightened awareness and enforcement campaign is to increase seat belt use statewide. The rate of seat belt use in Idaho is 76 percent – one of the lowest in the country. Concern for those who don’t wear their belts is put into perspective when considering that the

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24 percent who did not wear seat belts accounted for 60 percent of Idaho traffic deaths last year.

Gary Rose, retired EMS division chief for the Idaho Falls Fire Department, knows the consequences of not buckling up – not just through his work experience, but through personal experience as well. His unbuckled teenage son died in a traffic crash.

“We’ll never know what he might have been able to accomplish, or whose lives he would have influenced,” Rose says. “It’s a needless waste.”

Rose said those who don’t buckle up shouldn’t just worry about losing their life, they should worry about sustaining serious injuries.

“Think about what you like to do more than anything else in the world,” he says. “Then imagine life without being able to do that. Think about losing your arms or legs, or the use of them, and then reconsider using your belt.”

About Idaho’s Safety Restraint Laws and the *Click It, Don’t Risk It!* Program

Idaho law requires all vehicle occupants to be properly restrained no matter where they are seated. Fines for violating Idaho’s safety restraint laws range from \$10 to \$69. Increasing patrols to enforce the law is intended to save lives and reduce the costs associated with traffic crashes.

For more information, please call ITD’s Office of Traffic and Highway Safety at (208) 334-8100 or go to <http://itd.idaho.gov/ohs>.

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